

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

In the November 16, 2004 Office Action, claims 1-26 were pending, claims 14-26 were allowed, claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 12 were rejected, and claims 3, 4, 7, 10, 11, 13 were objected to as being depending upon rejected base claims.

Claims 1, 2, 5, 6, 8, 9, and 12 were rejected under 35 USC 102(b) as anticipated by US Patent 4,996,674 (Thompson).

Independent claims 1 and 8 have been amended herein to clarify the scope of the claimed invention and to clarify the differences between the invention and the Thompson patent. In claim 1, as amended, the outer housing of the present invention has an axial hole that mates with the reduced diameter section of the threaded sleeve. This distinguishes the Thompson patent because the head mass element 3 (right side of Fig. 1a) has an axial hole (counterbored area for nut 7), but it does not mate or nest with the reduced diameter section of the claimed threaded sleeve. It is unclear what part of the nut 7 is considered by the examiner to be the claimed reduced diameter section, and it is unlike the reduced diameter section 54 shown in Figure 3 of the present application. The reduced diameter section fits in close proximity with the counterbored hole 52 of the outer housing 46 (Figure 4). See, also, lines 4-6 of page 6 of the present application. This is not the case with Thompson's nut 7, which is a hex nut and needs clearance around it to fit a tool for tightening and loosening.

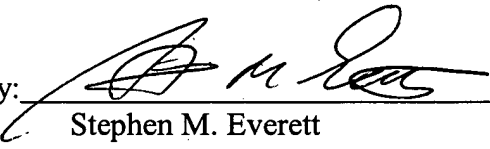
Independent claim 8 has been amended to clarify that the sleeve portion of the threaded sleeve is cylindrical, which distinguishes it from the hexagonal shape of the nut 7 of the Thompson patent. Claim 9 has been amended to specify that the sleeve portion of the threaded sleeve and the counterbored hole of the outer housing are proximal to the mating contact surfaces between the outer housing and threaded sleeve. This is another point of distinction over the Thompson patent, wherein the counterbored hole of the head mass element 3 (right side of Fig. 1a) is distal, not proximal, of the mating contact surfaces.

For these reasons, applicant submits that the application is now in condition for allowance. If a telephone interview would be helpful, the examiner may contact the undersigned attorney at 415-772-4900.

Respectfully submitted,

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